

April 23, 2015

Beth Ashcroft  
Director  
Office of Program Evaluation and Government Accountability

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In OPEGA's 2013 report on Healthy Maine Partnerships' FY13 Contracts and Funding, the Department's formal response included several actions that DHHS was taking relevant to OPEGA's recommendations. Please find below updates on those particular items.

This work is ongoing and the Department continues to strive for continuous quality improvement in this area, as well as other areas of the Department.

1. Conduct a new Request for Proposal process for the HMP initiative grants to begin FY16. OCQI working with MCDC on scoring processes for this to ensure strict adherence to State's RFP process.

*Maine CDC is currently preparing a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the next Healthy Maine Partnership initiative (HMP) funding cycle, with contracts to begin July 1, 2016 pending funding availability. Preparation for this RFP has consisted of the development and implementation of a formal Request for Information (RFI) process conducted through a contracted provider.*

*The RFI was designed to give Maine CDC broad community input into the programming, structure, and funding distribution for the HMP initiative. The RFI process has been completed and the contractor is working with Maine CDC staff in formatting and analyzing the data. Planned next steps are determination of actual HMP programming, and the integration of structure and funding information gathered from the RFI into an RFP format. The RFP development process will also include consideration of applicant eligibility, proposal content, and the scoring process. The RFP development process will include multiple reviews of materials, development of performance measures and the submission/review process; The Office of Continuous Quality Improvement will be engaged in various stages of the RFP development and review process.*

*The RFP development process is following the guidance of Division of Contract Management in order to have a RFP process completed in time for July 1, 2016 contracts. The expected timeline has the RFP development process completed by fall 2015, release of the RFP late fall 2015, and applications due winter 2015-2016.*

2. The DHHS Legal team working with State Archives to review and update DHHS records management policies and practices.

*As has been noted, not only in the OPEGA report from December 2013, but in subsequent discussions with the Government Oversight Committee by members of state government including the Secretary of State, records retention and archives is a major issues across state government and not isolated to DHHS. This appears to be an extremely under-resourced area of state government.*

*The Department recognizes the critical nature of having appropriate policies and procedures in place to manage public records. We take this very seriously and are undergoing myriad efforts to improve in this area.*

*To begin addressing this significant issue, the DHHS legal team, along with input from State Archives and the state's Public Access Ombudsman, has developed a comprehensive records management training that is available online for all DHHS staff. DHHS General Counsel, along with the Public Access Ombudsman and State Archive staff presented this training to more than 80 senior managers at DHHS. This is now being used as a model for other state agencies.*

*The Department has also completed an inventory of active, Commissioner-appointed Records Officers across DHHS. Currently there are nine dedicated Records Officers within DHHS. Two in the Commissioner's Office, one at the Office of Child and Family Services, two at the Office of Aging and Disability Services, two at the Maine Center for Disease Control, one at the Office for Family Independence and one at Riverview Psychiatric Center. The Department anticipates adding additional Records Officers for other DHHS offices in the near term.*

*The Department has also completed an inventory of all current records center cardholders. Cardholders have access to the records belonging to the unit in which they work at the time they apply for their card. Access cards do not expire. There are eleven cardholders still holding cards that would allow them access to information they no longer are entitled to access. Termination of these cards is in process. The Department is establishing procedures to undertake an inventory every quarter (since DHHS experiences about 3 personnel actions per day) in order to ensure our cardholders are accessing only records appropriate to their work.*

*Other ongoing work includes updating of records retention schedules across offices within DHHS to ensure that records are managed appropriately. This is a significant and time consuming process and will take time to bring current in each office across DHHS.*

*As has been noted by other individuals at the Government Oversight Committee, records retention as a whole in Maine government is an area that needs ongoing improvement. The Department is wholly committed to this important effort.*

3. DHHS was working on establishing quality performance measures for partners including HMPs.

*There have been process measures developed and implemented to monitor the performance of HMP's. A significant portion of performance measurement work is incorporated in the work done around Requests for Information and Requests for Proposals. These aligned efforts go hand in hand to ensure that contracts are properly awarded and that those contracts are based in quality measurements of performance to ensure the desired outcome for the dollars spent.*

*Additionally, resources have been dedicated to assist in the crafting of the RFP that will include the development of new performance measures, with a particular focus on measuring improved population health outcomes. OCQI will work with the CDC on the development and refinement of these measures.*

If you have additional questions please don't hesitate to let me know.

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